

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 SS-15 /028 W
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P 291723Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2357

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 3564

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, MO
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: COUNTRY EVALUATION PLAN FOR MOROCCO

REF: STATE 148702

1. DRAFT PLAN FOR MOROCCO CONTAINED REFTEL IS AN EXCELLENT FIRST CUT, WITH MUCH USEFUL MATERIAL. WE IN PARTICULAR FIND ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS PARAS 8-10 TO THE POINT. WE HAVE A FEW PROBLEMS WITH INDIVIDUAL DETAILS IN NARRATIVE PORTIONS OF DRAFT. FOR EXAMPLE, A NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS ARE PRESENTED AS FACT, WHEREAS WE BELIEVE SOLID PROOF IS LACKING. ALSO, WE RECOMMEND THAT OVERALL PERSPECTIVE BE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AT OUTSET OF THE DOCUMENT. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THIS REPORT MIGHT AT SOME POINT BECOME PUBLIC. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY'S SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS, GEARED TO NUMBERING OF PARAGRAPHS IN REFTEL.

2. (2 A) CONDITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOROCCO. RECOMMEND REVISION OF ENTIRE PARAGRAPH TO READ: "THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS SEEN STEADY PROGRESS WITH RESPECT TO UN HUMAN RIGHTS PRECEPTS FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON. DESPITE OBVIOUS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOROCCO AND THE ADVANCED DEMOCRACIES OF THE WEST, KING HASSAN RECOGNIZES THE NEED FOR VISIBLE, CONTINUING POLITICAL MODERNIZATION TOWARD MORE BROADLY-BASED PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT. A PEACEFUL EIGHT-MONTH ELECTORAL PROCESS CULMINATED IN JUNE 1977 WITH A NEW PARLIAMENT. DESPITE COMPLAINTS OF "IRREGULARITIES,"
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THE RECENT ELECTIONS MARKED A REAL IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PAST. OPPOSITION PARTIES TOOK PART FULLY, ARE PLANNING TO PARTICIPATE WHEN PARLIAMENT FIRST CONVENES IN OCTOBER 1977, AND ARE EXPECTED TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE NEW CABINET ANTICIPATED FOR SHORTLY BEFORE. THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, MEANWHILE, HAS ENTAILED INCREASED POLITICAL FREEDOMS. PRESS CENSORSHIP WAS LIFTED IN MARCH 1977. SEVERAL HUNDRED POLITICAL PRISONERS UNDER DETENTION FOR A NUMBER

OF YEARS WERE TRIED IN 1976 AND EARLY 1977, LEAVING ONLY A HANDFUL OF UNTRIED CASES ON THE DOCKETS. DESPITE A PERSISTENT GUERRILLA WAR SUPPORTED BY ALGERIA IN THE SAHARA, SECURITY MEASURES WITHIN MOST OF MOROCCO REMAIN UNOBTRUSIVE AND ARE LARGELY DEVOTED TO SAFEGUARDING THE KING."

3. (3 A) SUGGEST INSERT "1971 AND 1972" BEFORE "COUP ATTEMPTS."

4. (3 B) WE DO NOT CONSIDER RECENT REPORT OF BEATING OF RABAT MUNICIPAL COUNCILMAN "AUTHORITATIVE" OR INDICATIVE OF CONDITIONS AT LARGE. WHEN SEEN BY EMBOFF SHORTLY AFTER THE INCIDENT, HE DID NOT SHOW PHYSICAL SIGNS OF MISTREATMENT. ALLEGATION MUST BE SEEN AS PART OF OPPOSITION CLAIMS OF ELECTORAL IRRGULARITIES AND MAY BE EXAGGERATED. FURTHERMORE, THE POLICE OFFICER IN QUESTION IS KNOWN AS A HIGHLY EMOTIONAL AND VIOLENT INDIVIDUAL, AND HIS BEHAVIOR IS MORE LIKELY A PERSONAL ABERRATION THAN A REFLECTION OF POLICE POLICY. ALSO, SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO INDIVIDUALS COULD PROVE EMBARRASSING FOR THEM AND FOR US SHOULD REPORT BECOME PUBLIC. WE THEREFORE SUGGEST DELETION OF PHRASE BEGINNING "APART FROM" AND ENDING "IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHERS," AND REPHRASING REMAINDER OF SENTENCE AS FOLLOWS: "WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL ALLEGATIONS OF MISTREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE POLICE, WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE THAT THIS TYPE OF PUNISHMENT HAS BEEN INFLICTED IN A WIDESPREAD OR SYSTEMATIC MANNER."

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5. (3 C) OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE HELD UNTIL LATE 1976- EARLY 1977, BULK OF THEM SINCE MARCH 1973 EVENTS, I.E., FOR A PERIOD OF SEVERAL YEARS. EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE EVIDENCE THAT "PERHAPS AS MANY AS 100 ARE STILL BEING HELD." ALSO, IT NOT CLEAR FROM DRAFT WHETHER THIS GROUP BEING HELD BEFORE OR AFTER TRIAL. WE HAVE IMPRESSION FIGURE IS LOWER AS FAR AS DETENTIONS "WITHOUT TRIAL" ARE CONCERNED. RE LEFTISTS, WE ARE NOT CERTAIN THAT KING'S REPORTED STATEMENT TO FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS SUFFICIENT BASIS FOR JUDGMENT THAT THESE DISSIDENTS MAY BE HELD FOR EXTENDED PERIOD WITHOUT DUE LEGAL PROCESS. IN ADDITION, PUBLIC RELEASE OF SUCH INFORMATION COULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE OUR RELATIONS WITH KING AND FRENCH. THEREFORE URGE DELETION OF THIS REPORTED STATEMENT. FINALLY, WE DO NOT
T
FEEL ON SUFFICIENTLY FIRM GROUND TO JUDGE WHETHER TEMPORARY DETENTION WAS WIDELY USED FOR
INTIMIDATION DURING JUNE ELECTIONS, ALTHOUGH THERE MAY WELL HAVE BEEN INCIDENTS OF THIS NATURE. LAST TWO SENTENCES COULD READ: "TEMPORARY DETENTION HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN USED IN YEARS PAST AS AN INTIMIDATION TACTIC TO KEEP OPPOSITION ELEMENTS IN LINE DURING PERIODS OF STRESS. THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN JUNE MAY HAVE WITNESSED ISOLATED CASES OF THIS NATURE, BUT

APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN A MAJOR IMPROVEMENT OVER PREVIOUS ELECTIONS
IN THIS REGARD."

6. (4 A) COMMUNIST PARTY OF PROGRESS AND SOCIALISM IS "LEGAL",
NOT ILLEGAL AS STATED IN DRAFT. WE ESTIMATE NUMBER OF JEWS
REMAINING IN MOROCCO AT ABOUT 18,000. SUGGEST REVISION OF NEXT-
TO-LAST SENTENCE TO READ: "AS TO FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, DURING THE
RECENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN ALL PARTIES WERE ALLOWED TO
HOLD MEETINGS, ALTHOUGH SOME INDIVIDUAL GATHERINGS WERE REPORTEDLY
PROHIBITED."

7. (4 B) SUGGEST PHRASE "BUT ASSUMING THE APPLICANT HAS SUFFICIENT
FINANCIAL RESOURCES" BE DELETED. THERE ARE HALF MILLION
UNPROPERTIED MOROCCAN WORKERS IN EUROPE. SUGGEST REST OF SENTENCE
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BE REVISED TO READ: "AND WHILE RESTRICTION OF FOREIGN TRAVEL FOR
POLITICAL REASONS OCCURRED IN YEARS PAST, WE HAVE NO RECENT
INDICATIONS OF SUCH RESTRICTION."

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2358

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 3564

8. (4 C) DEFERRAL OF ELECTORAL PROCESS WAS ALSO JUSTIFIED BY
GOM BY NEED FOR INTERNAL UNITY IN CONNECTION WITH "RECOVERY"
OF SAHARA. IN SECOND SENTENCE, SUGGEST INSERTION OF "CONSTITUTIONAL"
BEFORE "PREROGATIVE." INSTEAD OF PHRASE, "DESPITE A CONSIDERABLE
AMOUNT OF RIGGING", SUGGEST FOLLOWING: "DESPITE ALLEGATIONS OF
RIGGING AND OF HEAVY-HANDED PERSUASION." THE FIGURE OF 191
PRO-GOVERNMENT DEPUTIES MAY BE TOO HIGH. OPPOSITION - INCLUDING
ISTIQLAL, USFP, UMT, AND PPS-NUMBERS 74, LEAVING REMAINDER OF
190. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT HAVE FIRM PREDICTION ON FUTURE VOTING

ATTITUDES OF MPCD, WHICH HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF ELECTIONS, AND OTHER RIGHTWINGERS ARE ALSO SOMETHING OF A QUESTION MARK. SUGGEST INSTEAD "OVER TWO-THIRDS" MAJORITY. LAST PHRASE SHOULD READ: "THE OPPOSITION PARTIES INTEND TO CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM TO PROMOTE FURTHER EVOLUTION TOWARD TRUE POLITICAL PLURALISM IN THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE AREA WITH A FUNCTIONING MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM."

9. (5 B) SUGGEST REPHRASING OF SECOND SENTENCE AS FOLLOWS:

"SINCE THE 1971 COUP ATTEMPT, CORRUPTION IN TERMS OF LOCKHEED-TYPE BRIBES TO OBTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS HAS BEEN SHARPLY CURTAILED, AND THERE IS NO RECENT EVIDENCE OF ANY ATTEMPT TO SEEK SUCH PAYOFFS FROM ANY AMERICAN COMPANY. MUCH OF NATION'S NATURAL RESOURCES ARE UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL, WITH APPROXIMATELY 40 PERCENT OF GNP GENERATED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR. PUBLIC CORPORATIONS OWN ENTITIES CREATING 60 PERCENT OF GNP AND HAVE MINORITY HOLDINGS IN ANOTHER 20 PERCENT. WHILE PRIVATE BUSINESS, TO A LARGE EXTENT, REMAINS CONTROLLED BY RELATIVELY SMALL ELITE,

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THERE IS ENCOURAGING EVIDENCE OF EMERGING NEW MIDDLE CLASS."

10. (6) "STRICT, PERHAPS HARSH" ENFORCEMENT IS POSSIBLE IN MATTERS INVOLVING THE SECURITY OF THE KING. SUCH ENFORCEMENT, HOWEVER, IS NOT USUAL IN ROUTINE MATTERS.

11. (8) AT END OF FIRST SENTENCE FOLLOWING "POLITICAL LEADERS" SUGGEST ADDING "FROM THE AMBASSADOR ON DOWN." SUGGEST DELETION OF PHRASE BEGINNING "WHETHER THESE STEPS" AND ENDING "TO INFLUENCE VOTERS", AND SUBSTITUTION OF PHRASE "THE RAPIDITY OF THEIR FUTURE EVOLUTION."

12. (9) FOLLOWING THE PHRASE "MOROCCO'S AUTHORITARIAN TRADITIONS WILL ONLY EVOLVE," SUGGEST INSERTION OF "TOWARD DEMOCRATIC FORMS."

13. (10) IN FIRST SENTENCE, SUGGEST DELETE "IF NOT ENTHUSIASTICALLY."

14. AMBASSADOR ANDERSON HAS PERSONALLY REVIEWED DEPARTMENT'S DRAFT AND EMBASSY'S COMMENTS.

15. WOULD APPRECIATE REVISED TEXT BY TELEGRAM WHEN IT HAS BEEN APPROVED.

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